DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 412 174 SO 028 781

AUTHOR Boyer, Candace L.
TITLE Using Museum Resources in the K-12 Social Studies Curriculum. ERIC Digest.
INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, Bloomington, IN.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO EDO-SO-97-11
PUB DATE 1996-08-00
NOTE 4p.
CONTRACT RR93002014
AVAILABLE FROM ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, 2805 East Tenth Street, Suite 120, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47408; phone: 812-855-3838, 800-266-3815.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- ERIC Publications (071) -- ERIC Digests in Full Text (073)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Community Resources; Educational Resources; Elementary Secondary Education; Exhibits; Folk Culture; *Heritage Education; *Material Culture; *Museums; *Realia; *Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS ERIC Digests

ABSTRACT

This ERIC Digest promotes the use of museums as social studies teaching resources. Because of the wealth of information and the breadth of scope of material found in museums, they can be invaluable as resources for the classroom as well as for tours. The guide covers the recent trend of museums catering to the educator through the development of lesson plans, brochures, student classes, newsletters, videos, and even traveling outreach persons. The Digest identifies a wide variety of materials available both on- and off-site, including five specific web-sites. (KCM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 412 174

Using Museum Resources in the K-12 Social Studies Curriculum. ERIC Digest.

by Candace L. Boyer

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BBB24392=ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, Bloomington, IN.

EDD00036=Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.

Published: Aug97

SO 028 781

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ERIC Digest
Clearinghouse for Social Studies/ Social Science Education

2805 EAST TENTH STREET • SUITE 120
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA 47408
812-855-3838 • 800-266-3815

EDO-SO-97-11 August 1997

Using Museum Resources in the K-12 Social Studies Curriculum

by Candace L. Boyer

Why Museums? Teachers are always looking for good teaching materials that will bring the social studies to life for their students. A teacher's "toolbox" often includes resources gathered over time from many different sources, including colleagues and institutions such as state departments of education, school systems, publishers, libraries, and universities. However, a large group of dynamic educational institutions, numbering over 7,600 in the United States, is often overlooked by teachers. What are these underutilized educational resources and why should their materials be added to a teacher's "toolbox?"

They are *museums*. By procuring, caring for, studying, and displaying significant natural and cultural objects, museums as educational institutions teach us about the objects of lasting human interest and value. The word "museum" derives from the ancient word "muse," a Greek mythological association with the nine muses who presided over song, poetry, and the arts and sciences, and thus education. In the ancient world, a museum was both a "place of the muses" and a place of scholarship and learning, as in the Museum of Alexandria founded during the third century B.C.

Today the muses presiding over the world's objects of historical, artistic, and scientific value can be found in every corner of the globe as aquariums, arboretums/botanical gardens, art museums, children's museums, historic sites/homes, history museums, natural history museums, nature centers, planetariums, science museums/technology centers, specialized museums, and zoos. Within each of these places objects of lasting interest and value, organized into collections representing all time periods and increasingly understood and exhibited within an interdisciplinary, human context, await discovery. They are the real things of our social world and their value and accessibility make them vital teaching tools for connecting students to the world of social studies.

As we enter the twenty-first century, large and small museums are working harder than ever to help teachers and students make this discovery and connection to these objects. According to the American Association of Museums (AAM), the community of museums recognizes that "education is inherent in the public mission of museums" (The Official Museum Directory 1997, AAM 1996). As a result of this widely accepted museum policy, museums increasingly are taking their educational function more seriously. Recent museum education initiatives include the application of educational principles (learning theories and teaching methodologies) to the development, implementation, and assessment of exhibits and K-12 school programs and materials. This translates into better "musing" for teachers and students through museum learning opportunities designed to complement and enrich classroom instruction.

Where to Start. *Types of Museums.* First, think broadly about what types of museums exist at the national, state, regional, and local levels relevant to the desired curriculum objectives. Specific categories useful to social studies teachers include but are not limited to the following:

- history, art, and science museums
- historic sites and homes
- park museums and visitor centers
- children's museums
- college and university museums
- archives
- specialized organizations (containing museum-related collections, information, and programs):
  - historical societies and bureaus (including their student divisions and genealogy chapters)
  - preservation and historic landmark organizations
  - libraries

It is important to note that science, nature, natural history, and technological museums also offer many resources for social studies educators and teachers seeking interdisciplinary and across-the-discipline instructional materials.

Types of Museum Teaching Aids. Next, consider the types of free, for-loan, and/or for-purchase teaching aids available from museums. Experiencing and obtaining these aids through a visit is preferable for teachers and students alike. Well-planned, pre-arranged student tours provide the best learning experiences for schools. But if a first-hand visit is not geographically or financially feasible, it is possible to acquire teaching aids through museum outreach and the electronic connections outlined below:

- school and teacher programs and materials (often available on-site or through outreach):
  - student tours, programs, and classes (individualized programming often available)
  - "on-the-shelf" teacher resources such as lesson plans and packets, professional development classes, traveling resource persons and kits, teacher brochures, and newsletters (for updates, submit address to mailing list)
  - facsimile artifacts and documents (maps, images, letters), publications, photographs, slides, transparencies, postcards, posters, videos, tapes, CD-ROMs, and video discs – often available through museum gift shops
- general and specific information material:
  - brochures, pamphlets, and other introductory material
  - museum publications (collection monographs, journals, guidebooks, and other specialized items)
  - museum newsletters (for updates, submit address to mailing list)

Candace L. Boyer, a social studies teacher and former museum educator, is a Staff Associate of the Social Studies Development Center of Indiana University.

- World Wide Web sites (where available, an international, national, state, regional, and local museum source for teacher materials, collection highlights, changing exhibitions, upcoming events, new programs, and links to additional resources)

Give priority to materials that are most likely not available through any other source. When visiting a museum, be sure to explore all available gift shops for teaching aids. (Museum gift shops can often mail teaching aids ordered by phone or electronically. Large museum gift shops often publish mail-order catalogs.) Remember that museums are individual institutions differing in size, collection focus, and staff and funding levels. Not all museums can produce specialized K-12 educational programs and materials but they can provide good will, personal contact, and the kinds of basic information listed above. And both large and small museums are constantly growing and expanding, creating new exhibits, programs, materials, and World Wide Web sites.

Making the Link. *Finding and Contacting Museums.* This is a key step. One strategy for finding the names, telephone numbers, and mailing and electronic addresses of museums is to start with the familiar. Consult the nearest museum. Usually a staff member or volunteer knows about teaching and teachers' needs. Many large museums have education departments consisting of one or more professional educators who would make an excellent teacher contact. Even if these museum contacts do not have the answers, they can often refer teachers to a regional, state, and/or national organization or consortium of museum educators who knows what resources are available and how to obtain them. Another strategy is to consult libraries. Talk with reference librarians about how to obtain information, tourism/travel books, and museum guides/directories. Also, make sure any museum information already being sent to school is accessible. If possible, search the following World Wide Web international museum indexes:

- "The World Wide Web Virtual Library: Museums" (supported by International Council of Museums) – http://www.icom.org/vlmp/
- Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County's "Guide to Museums and Cultural Resources" – http://www.lam.mus.ca.us/webmuseums/

A National Museum Teacher Resource Sampler

- National Archives and Records Administration, Education Department, 700 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20408; (202)501-5205; http://www.nara.gov/
  Highlights: Variety of primary source teaching materials (catalog available).
- National Gallery of Art, Department of Teacher and School Programs, Washington, DC 20565; (202)842-6796; http://www.nga.gov/programs/programs.htm
  Highlights: Extensive teaching resources loaned free of charge ("Extension Programs Catalogue" available) and school and teacher programs.
- Smithsonian Institution, Office of Education, Arts & Industries Building, Room 1163, MRC 402, Washington, DC 20560; (202)357-2700; http://educate.si.edu/
  Highlights: "Smithsonian Resource Guide for Teachers 1997" describes 455 educational museum products available annually (print or on-line publication, 84 pages). For additional materials and information, contact the education departments of specific Smithsonian history, art, and science museums.

References and ERIC Resources. The following list of resources includes references used to prepare this Digest. The items followed by an ED number are available in microfiche and/or paper copies from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). For information about prices, contact EDRS, 7420 Fullerton Road, Suite 110, Springfield, Virginia 22153-2852; telephone numbers are (703) 440-1400 and (800) 443-3742. Entries followed by an EJ number, annotated monthly in CURRENT INDEX TO JOURNALS IN EDUCATION (CIJE), are not available through EDRS. However, they can be located in the journal section of most larger libraries by using the bibliographic information provided, requested through Interlibrary Loan, or ordered from commercial reprint services.

American Association of Museums. THE OFFICIAL MUSEUM DIRECTORY 1997, Vol. 1. New Jersey: R.R. Bowker, 1996.

Boyer, Candace. MEMORIES OF MONTPELIER: HOME OF JAMES AND DOLLEY MADISON. TEACHING WITH HISTORIC PLACES. Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places, 1996. ED number to be assigned.

Carpenter, James J. "Bird Bottles, The Fourth Estate and Mr. Jefferson's Music: Bringing Back History from your Travels." SOCIAL EDUCATION 60 (February 1996): 73-76. EJ 526 696.

Hunter, Kathleen A. and White, Charles S. TEACHING WITH HISTORIC PLACES: A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS, PRESERVATIONISTS, AND MUSEUM AND SITE INTERPRETERS. Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1995. ED number to be assigned.

National Archives and Records Administration. TEACHING WITH DOCUMENTS: USING PRIMARY SOURCES FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES. Washington, DC: 1989. ED 318 667.

Sheppard, Beverly, ed. BUILDING MUSEUM AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS. Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations, 1993.

Voris, Helen H. and Others. TEACH THE MIND, TOUCH THE SPIRIT: A GUIDE TO FOCUSED FIELD TRIPS. Chicago, IL: Field Museum of Natural History, 1986. ED 341 601.

Note: To locate additional museum teaching materials in the ERIC database, use museum-related search terms (free text and/or as keywords) such as: "museums," "experiential learning," "heritage education," "built environment," "local history," "community resources," "primary sources," "material culture," "field trips," "exhibits," and "outreach programs."

This publication was prepared with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, under contract RR93002014. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of OERI or ED.